

**REMARKS**

The claims have been amended to expedite prosecution. As noted above, claims 21 and 24 are not subject to any basis for rejection. Claim 33 is presumably rejected only because of its dependence on rejected claim 28; the dependence of this claim has been changed and the wording modified to clarify that the complex may or may not be present (depending on whether or not an antibody is present in the serum). The rejection of claims 34-35 also appears to be due to their ultimate dependence from claim 28 which was rejected.

Thus, the claims have been amended to obviate all outstanding bases for rejection. Applicants appreciate that the Office agrees that there is adequate written description for claims 21 and 24; there is no substantive basis to reject claims 33-35 to the extent they are dependent on claim 21.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 is also moot; again, claims 21-24 were not included in this rejection and claims 33-35 are now dependent thereon. While the cited documents indicate that filaggrin may be immunoreactive with autoimmune antibodies in rheumatoid arthritis patients, and that there may be a post-translational processing of arginine to citrulline, there is no disclosure or suggestion of the specific peptides now claimed.

Accordingly, it is believed that claims 21, 24 and 33-35 are in a position for allowance and passage of these claims to issue is respectfully requested.

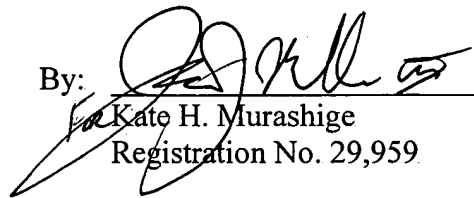
If minor issues, for example, pertaining to precise claim language, remain, a telephone call to the undersigned is respectfully requested.

In the unlikely event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Assistant Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to **Deposit Account No. 03-1952** referencing docket No. 577802000100.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2004

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